(b) Augmentation of Staff to reduce and clear pendencies; and

(c) Simplification of the procedure to establish identify/nationality of the passport applicant.

VAMBAY in Karnataka

2939. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY) in Karnataka in the last three years; and

(b) whether his Ministry has any programme for Education of Urban Poor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) Since the inception of Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY) in 2001-02 Government of India (GOI) subsidy amounting to Rs. 90.06 crore has been released to the State of Karnataka to implement 7 schemes under VAMBAY. Year-wise details are as follows:—

Year	GoI subsidy released (Rs. in crore)	Dwelling Units covered	Toilet Seats covered
2001-02	9.15	3333	575
2002-03	19.67	6979	2215
2003-04	39.44	14978	3090
2004-05	4.06	0	2030
2005-06	17.74	7992	0
TOTAL:	90.06	33282	7910

(b) No, Sir.

Rising cost of living in towns

2940. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cost of living in towns has been increasing more than 10 per cent yearly for the last more than four years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it would deepen the gap between the rich and the poor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to minimize this gap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (d) The prices of some commodities seem to have gone up in the recent past which may affect the urban poor. In order to have direct attack on the proverty in urban areas, Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation is implementing an Employment-oriented Urban Poverty Alleviation Programme named Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) since 1.12.1997. The scheme strives for providing self-employment to urban poor living below the poverty line through setting up of micro-enterprises and also through provision of wage employment by utilizing the labour of urban poor in construction of socially and economically useful public assets.

Grants to Prasar Bharati

2941. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the grants Government are providing to the Prasar Bharati, Doordarshan annually since last three years, and whether Prasar Bharati is incapable to generate its own revenue;

(b) if so, the problems thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps Government are going to take for making Prasar Bharati independent and competitive Prasar Bharati?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) Government is providing grants to Prasar Bharati as a whole and not to Doordarshan separately. During the last 3 years, details of grants provided to Prasar Bharati are given below:

Year	Amount in crores
2003-04	1001.47
2004-05	1010.78
2005-06	1078.02

Prasar Bharati is not running purely on commercial basis. The earning of commercial revenue is not the only objective of the organization but is